

7003 0040103

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Currently Amended) A fermentation process suitable for the preparation of a desired L-amino acid selected from the group consisting of L-threonine, L-isoleucine, L-valine, and L-lysine, wherein the following steps are carried out:

a) fermentation of an *E.coli* strain in a fermentation broth for producing the desired L-amino acid, wherein the endogenous gene encoding phosphoenolpyruvate (PEP) carboxykinase (*pckA* gene) of *E.coli* is ~~attenuated~~ inactivated by one or more methods of mutagenesis selected from the group consisting of deletion, insertional mutagenesis due to homologous recombination, and transition or traversal mutagenesis with incorporation of a non-sense mutation in the *pckA* gene, and

b) concentration of the fermentation broth to eliminate water and increase the concentration of said L-amino acids in the broth and *E.coli*, and

c) isolation of the L-amino acid, ~~constituents of the fermentation broth and the biomass acids.~~

2-5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein one or more *E.coli* genes selected from the group consisting of:

~~6.1~~ (a) the *thrABC* operon coding for aspartate kinase, homoserine dehydrogenase, homoserine kinase and threonine synthase,

~~(a)~~ the *pyc* gene coding for pyruvate carboxylase,

(b) the *pps* gene coding for phosphoenolpyruvate synthase,

(c) the *ppc* gene coding for phosphoenolpyruvate carboxylase,

(d) the *pntA* and *pntB* genes coding for transhydrogenase,

(e) the *rhtB* gene for homoserine resistance, and

(f) the *rhtC* gene for threonine resistance, and

(g) the *gdhA* gene coding for glutamate dehydrogenase

are overexpressed by increasing the copy number or placed under a strong promoter during fermentation for the preparation of said L-amino acids.

7. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 1, wherein one or more *E. coli* genes selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the *tdh* gene coding for threonine dehydrogenase,
- (b) the *mdh* gene coding for malate dehydrogenase,
- (c) the gene product of the open reading frame (orf) *yjfA*, and
- (d) the gene product of the open reading frame (orf) *ytfP*,

~~are attenuated or the expression is reduced~~ inactivated by one or more methods of mutagenesis selected from the group consisting of deletion, insertional mutagenesis due to homologous recombination, and transition or traversal mutagenesis with incorporation of a non-sense mutation in the *pckA* gene during fermentation for the preparation of said L-amino acids.

8-27. (Canceled)

28. (New) The process of claim 1, wherein constituents of the fermentation broth and the biomass in its entirety or portions thereof <sup>are</sup> ~~being~~ isolated as a solid product together with said L-amino acids.

29. (New) The process according to claim 1, wherein L-threonine is produced by fermenting the *E. coli* strain MG442 $\Delta$ *pckA* deposited under DSM13761.

30. (New) The process according to claim 1, wherein L-threonine is produced by fermenting *E. coli* strain B-3996 $\Delta$ *kur* $\Delta$ *tdh* $\Delta$ *pckA*/pVIC40 deposited under DSM14150.

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